

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough examination of the application. No new matter is believed to be added to the application by this Amendment.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-30 and 32-37 are pending in the application. Claims 32 and 33 have been amended to improve their language. Claims 1-27 have been withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner. Claim 28 has been amended to recite the zirconium is a major component of the target. Support for claims 36 and 37 can be found in the specification in Table 1. The withdrawn claims have been amended to remove multiple dependencies.

Statement Of Substance Of Interview

The Examiner is thanked for graciously conducting a personal interview with the Applicants' representative on June 14, 2006. During the Interview, the patentability of the invention over Schneemeyer and Hartig were discussed in light of proposed amendments to the claims. The Examiner noted that amending claim 28 to recite that zirconium is a major component of the target would overcome the rejection over Schneemeyer.

At the end of the Interview, the Examiner prepared an Interview Summary. The Interview Summary has been reviewed, and it appears to accurately reflect the substance of the Interview.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 28-30 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Schneemeyer (U.S. Patent 5,912,797). Claims 33-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Schneemeyer.

Claims 28-30 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over the single reference of Hartig (U.S. Patent 5,403,458). Claims 33-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Hartig in view of Finley (U.S. Patent 6,677,063).

Applicants traverse the aforesaid rejections and respectfully requested reconsideration and withdrawal thereof.

Distinctions of the invention over the cited art references have been placed before the Examiner. For brevity, these distinctions will not be repeated here. However, the sputtering target of the present invention, as claimed, is clearly distinct from the technology of Schneemeyer, Hartig and Finley. In the Interview Summary, the Examiner has even acknowledged the patentability of the invention over Schneemeyer (*see, e.g.,* instant claim 28). A *prima facie* case of obviousness has thus not been made over claim 28. Claims depending upon claim 28 are patentable for at least the above reasons.

These rejections are overcome and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner is thanked for considering the Information Disclosure Statement filed March 25, 2004 and for making the initialed PTO-1449 form of record in the application in the Office Action mailed May 10, 2005.

The Drawings

The Examiner has indicated that the drawing figures are acceptable in the Office Action mailed May 5, 2005 and January 25, 2006.

Foreign Priority

The Examiner is respectfully has acknowledged foreign priority in the Office Action mailed January 25, 2006.

Conclusion

The Examiner's rejections have been overcome, obviated, or rendered moot. No issues remain. The Examiner is accordingly respectfully requested to place the application in condition for allowance and to issue a Notice of Allowability.

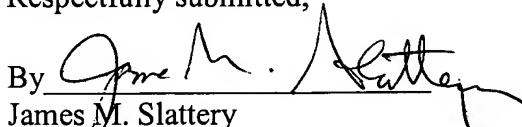
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Robert E. Goozner, Ph.D. (Reg. No.42,593) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

AMC

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